

Rachael,

We have continued our reporting on the former Hunters Point Naval Shipyard and cleanup and plan to publish a story in the coming weeks on the history of Building 606, which the San Francisco Police Department has leased since the late 1990s, and the concerns of some of the police who used to work there. To that end, we have spoken to more than two dozen former police officers who worked at Building 606 and have reviewed documents related to the building and its surroundings, including environmental reports, leases, memos, emails from federal and city officials, and Navy archives. We have attached some relevant portions of these documents to this email.

We'd like to get your comments on the following questions (in bold below), as well as any clarifications or corrections on the included statements. As we anticipate there may be some back-and-forth on these matters, our deadline is **Monday, July 2:**

- Building 606 was built in 1989 atop the soil footprint of a Navy building known as Building 503, which served as a Radioactive Contaminated Laundry in the 1940s and 1950s. The footprint of 606 also intersects with two other demolished Navy buildings with radiological histories, Buildings 507 and 508, which were part of the Naval Radiological Defense Laboratory.
- In 1994, a temporary lease of Building 606 was prepared for a film company, Skellington Productions. The paperwork involved an Environmental Baseline Survey for Building 606 as well as a Finding of Suitability for License. Two years later, in 1996, the Navy leased Building 606 to the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency (SFRA/OCII), which then subleased the building to the San Francisco Police Department, and similar documents were prepared — an EBS and a Finding of Suitability for Lease. (Please see the attached documents, the 1994 EBS and 1996 EBS, named 1994EBS.pdf and 1996EBS.pdf.)
- According to these and other documents, the environmental review for these leases was rushed. The 1996 EBS reads in part, “The EBS and FOSL analysis does not address the full array of documentation required by DOD Guidance.” Neither review included aerial photographs, interviews or soil sample results, and many of the documents from the Skellington lease in 1994 were re-used for the SFRA/OCII lease to the police department in 1996, with minor modifications. Also, the Navy decided in 1996 that no Environmental Impact Statement for the building was necessary, and made a Finding of No Significant Impact, writing that police use of the building “does not endanger human safety via exposure to any known hazardous materials.”
- The 1996 EBS also misrepresented the radiological history of the Building 606 site. The document calls Building 503 a “Ship’s Subsistence and Laundry” and says, falsely, that it did not have a use “consistent with the storage or use of hazardous materials.” Building 503 was the Radioactive Contaminated Laundry where radioactive clothing was washed and stored. The EBS also says that Buildings 507 and 508 were once used as radiological

labs and had been verified as “radiologically clean” decades earlier. But the buildings were declared clean using safety standards the Navy has admitted were obsolete.

- The lease documents make it clear that SFRA/OCII accepted the building in “as-is” condition. **Did the San Francisco Department of Public Health agree with this? If not, why? If so, why? Does SFDPH think that the city should have demanded a full review of potential site hazards, or an Environmental Impact Statement? If not, why not?**
- In 1989 and 1990, the Navy used soil data collected near Building 606 to perform a Human Health Risk Assessment. The Navy found “an estimated total cancer risk of 3.7×10^{-4} associated with the presence of the chemicals 1,4-dichlorobenzene and benzene” near Building 606. (This information is from the attached file, 2008FOSL.pdf.) According to these Navy figures, the cancer risk from those two chemicals alone is about 4 cancers per 10,000 people, or 1 in 2,500. This is 4 times higher than the high end of the EPA’s acceptable risk range (1 cancer per 10,000 people). **Did SFDPH know about these elevated levels of toxic chemicals near Building 606 and the associated increased cancer risk? If not, why not? If SFDPH was aware of this information, did the department ever communicate it to the occupants of the building? If not, why not? And given that there was an increased cancer risk associated with just these two chemicals, not to mention others, why did SFDPH tell the occupants of Building 606 that the area was safe and posed no health risk?**
- From the beginning, SFDPH assigned one of its employees, an industrial hygienist, to Building 606. Since then, eight hygienists have served in this role. There were six there in the first 10 years of the building’s occupancy. Police said that they felt hygienists were always leaving, and it concerned them that the city’s own health experts didn’t seem to want to stay at Building 606 very long. **Why were there so many different hygienists serving in that position? Were any concerned about safety issues at the site? Did any hygienists request to be transferred out of the shipyard?**
- The first hygienist, Hilary Stoermer, began in February 1997 and left the job the same year. She performed a scan for radioactivity at Building 606 and summarized her results in a May 1997 report (see attached file, 1997RadScan.pdf). The report concludes that “the mere presence of radioactive materials at Hunters Point Shipyard is not presenting a health hazard to occupants of Building 606.” We showed this report to a nuclear policy expert, Daniel Hirsch of U.C. Santa Cruz, and he told us the report was inadequate, because Stoermer used a blunt instrument — a geiger counter — that wasn’t sensitive enough to detect radioactivity at the levels required for cleanup. **What is SFDPH’s response? Also, because radioactive contaminants were later discovered by Navy contractors in areas around Building 606, doesn’t this mean that SFDPH’s 1997 radiation scan was inadequate?**
- The second SFDPH hygienist, Edward Ochi, worked in Room 105, a small office on the first floor of Building 606. It was his job to look out for the health of the people there.

Throughout 1997, Ochi dealt with numerous problems at the building, summarizing them in a December 3 memo to his boss at SFDPH and a deputy city attorney (see attached file, Dec3Memo.pdf). In the five-page memo, Ochi detailed the tainted ventilation system and other safety hazards: few street lights, bad roads, disconnected fire alarms, storm drains that often backed up and flooded. But he emphasized that the main risk at Building 606 was the ongoing Navy cleanup. “To date, Navy communication regarding the actual plans and scheduling for remediation activities has been extremely poor,” Ochi wrote. The Navy had failed to warn Building 606 of a potentially dangerous toxic event in September 1997, when a Navy work crew less than a mile from the building accidentally punctured buried cylinders of chlorine gas, releasing the gas into the air. Ochi predicted that as the cleanup continued and more people were transferred to Building 606, it was only going to get harder to safeguard people there. He wrote, “Failure to immediately and (adequately) address concerns regarding site hazards, both real and perceived will result in illnesses and human suffering, losses of productivity, and ongoing morale problems.”

- **After receiving Ochi’s memo, did SFDPH leaders do anything to “immediately and (adequately) address concerns regarding site hazards”? If so, what was done to address these concerns and protect the health of city employees in the building going forward? If not, why?**
- Four months later, in April 1998, Ochi submitted another memo to SFDPH leaders, this time summarizing a series of tap-water tests performed by the city starting in 1997. (Please see the attached file, 1998WaterMemo.pdf). Water samples were taken from Building 606 and also from the SFPD’s Hall of Justice headquarters downtown, to use for comparison. The results showed that Building 606’s water — which the police were using for showers and tooth-brushing — contained lead and trihalomethanes (which can cause heart and liver problems) in concentrations beyond what federal and state regulators consider safe, according to the SFDPH/Ochi memo. One water sample from Building 606 contained an amount of lead that was about 17 times the safe level. And the concentrations of petroleum byproducts and other contaminants in the Building 606 water were higher than the reference samples from the Hall of Justice.
- **What was SFDPH’s response to this Ochi memo about the building’s contaminated water supply? Were police ever allowed to drink the tap water in Building 606? If so, for how many weeks, months, or years were the employees of Building 606 drinking contaminated tap water? If they were given bottled water instead, when exactly did the switch to bottled water take place? After Ochi’s April 1998 memo that confirmed contaminants in the water, why did SFDPH continue to allow police to brush their teeth and take showers in the water? In SFPDH’s opinion, did the contaminated water at Building 606 endanger the health of the occupants, either in the short or long term? If not, why not?**
- The police that we spoke to said this detailed information in the Ochi memos — information about contaminants in the water, contaminants in the ventilation system, the release of chlorine gas at the landfill, and severe communication problems with the Navy — was never shared with them. Instead, they said the hygienist sometimes scotch-taped

brief information sheets to the wall on the first floor. **Why didn't SFDPH do more to inform the police of risks to their health? Given that the SFDPH hygienist was warning of "illnesses and human suffering, losses of productivity, and ongoing morale problems," why didn't SFDPH try to move the occupants of Building 606 to another office, or advocate for such a move? Is it SFDPH's position that the police and other employees who work at Building 606 today have zero increased health risk as a result of working there? If SFDPH believes there is zero increased health risk, what information is this belief based on?**

- At a November 6, 2002 city/agency meeting about the SFPD helipad, Amy Brownell of SFDPH took handwritten notes. She wrote on one page, "SFPD employees in Bldg 606 are also 'paranoid.'" She was apparently paraphrasing and quoting another meeting participant, a member of the City Attorney's Office. **Why did the CAO representative in the meeting say that police in Building 606 were "paranoid"? Was this opinion of the police in Building 606 shared by other city employees? Was it shared by SFDPH or SFDPH employees? If so, why did they consider police "paranoid"? Did anyone from the city ever tell the police directly that they were considered "paranoid"?**
- Police said that once the cleanup intensified in 2005, 2006, and 2007, the shipyard became an intolerable work environment with dust clouds and mud everywhere. Records show that the SFDPH was monitoring air quality in the building and regularly creating memos addressed to the building occupants. But police said they didn't receive much information from the hygienist about the cleanup going on around them, and that SFDPH should have done more to get better information from the Navy and communicate it to the police. **What is your response to that allegation? Should SFDPH done more to monitor the cleanup and get information about possible problems?**
- Over more than a decade, the police of the Tactical Division used the shipyard to train. They said they ran in the dirt, used flash grenades in buildings and trained their dogs in the fields. In the building, they lifted weights and ate meals. **Given the surrounding contamination, was SFDPH concerned about possible exposure through these activities? If not, why not? And is the department concerned today?**
- According to Navy reports, during the 2002/2003 Phase V radiological investigation of the 500-series buildings, elevated levels of radioactivity were measured at multiple locations at and near Building 606. (Source: (2012 Radiological Addendum to the Feasibility Study Report for Parcel E.) Specifically, a sample from the Building 507 site contained radium-226 at 4.402 picocuries per gram (above the release criterion of 1.633 picocuries per gram), and samples from the Building 508 site contained cesium-137 at 0.1267 picocuries per gram (above the current release criterion of 0.113 picocuries per gram) and radium-226 at 1.0577 picocuries per gram (below the release criterion but above background). Using the EPA Dose Compliance Calculator, and the fact that a chest X-ray typically gives a radiation dose of 2 millirem, the radium-226 level at Building 507 translates into the equivalent of 129 chest x-rays per year, and the radium-226 level at the Building 508 site equals 31 chest x-rays per year. These estimates are for a residential use

scenario. According to EPA calculators, the doses under an indoor-worker scenario are comparable.

- The Navy used these 2002/2003 radioactivity measurements along with information about chemical risk to calculate the total cancer risk at these sites. The total cancer risk was 1×10^{-3} for Building 507, according to the Navy. This means that if 1,000 people lived at a site with that level of contamination, 1 person would be expected to get cancer from the contamination alone. That's 1,000 times the normal EPA risk goal (1 cancer per 1,000,000 people) and 10 times the upper limit of what the EPA allows (1 cancer per 10,000 people). As for Building 508, the total cancer risk was 4×10^{-4} , according to the Navy. This means that if 2,500 people lived at a site with that level of contamination, 1 person would be expected to get cancer from the contamination alone. That's 400 times the normal EPA risk goal (1 cancer per 1,000,000 people) and 4 times the upper limit of what the EPA allows (1 cancer per 10,000 people). So, according to the Navy's own numbers and estimates, the cancer risk for these sites at Building 606, the police building, is higher than the high end of the risk range—far outside of what the EPA says the risk should be for the protection of human health. (For the Navy's cancer risk figures, please see the pages from the 2012 Radiological Addendum to the Feasibility Study Report for Parcel E report that are attached to this message as CancerRisk.pdf.) Police officers said that the Navy repeatedly told them that working at Building 606 was safe. **Was SFDPH aware that the Navy's own figures showed an increased cancer risk at the site? Was this information given to the city employees at Building 606? If not, why not?**
- We also spoke with one of the radiation technicians who performed these surveys of the 500-series buildings, Bert Bowers, who at the time worked for New World and later became the radiation safety officer for Tetra Tech. Bowers said he found "screaming hot" contamination beneath pieces of asphalt that were no more than 35 to 50 yards from Building 606. But Bowers said the Navy halted the surveys of the 500-series buildings and assigned the radiation technicians to other parts of the shipyard. In the 2004 Historical Radiological Assessment (HRA), the Navy publicly concluded that 503, 507 and 508 were "radiologically impacted." **Given the history of the area and the radioactivity does SFDPH think that people should have been placed in Building 606? Again, is it a health risk for people to continue to occupy the building?**
- There is a 2008 Finding of Suitability for Lease for Building 606. In the section on radiological hazards, the FOSL does not mention the results of the 2002/2003 Phase V radiological investigation, and the elevated levels of cesium-137 and radium-226 that were discovered near 606. Instead, the FOSL says that "there are no radiological concerns associated with... Building 606." The FOSL also says that "the area beneath Building 606 will require a radiological survey, and remediation if necessary. The survey beneath Building 606 has not yet been scheduled." **Did SFDPH share this information with the occupants of 606? Why did the city continue to lease the building if the Navy admitted that it didn't know whether the soil beneath it was radioactive? Does SFDPH think that the city should have continued to lease the building to the police while these radiological questions remained unanswered?**

- Later, between 2011 and 2012, the Navy returned to the 500-series buildings, sending Tetra Tech to take radiation measurements, and Tetra Tech released Final Status Survey reports based on these measurements in 2013. Tetra Tech said it found no elevated levels of radiation in the soil of Buildings 507 and 508. It did find elevated levels of cesium-137 in multiple samples of Building 503 soil. The 503 soil that Tetra Tech measured had been excavated in 1989 by the Navy, down to a depth of 5.5 feet, to make a crawl space beneath Building 606. Tetra Tech now disposed of 38 cubic yards of this soil as radioactive waste. It appears from Tetra Tech's report that the remaining soil beneath the building was not tested. **If elevated levels of radioactivity were found in the excavated soil, isn't it possible that radioactivity could still exist at elevated levels in the soil beneath Building 606 today? Based on these findings, is SFDPH concerned that the soil underneath Building 606 may be radioactive at possibly harmful levels? If not, why not?**
- In 2016 and 2017, the city and the Navy were discussing a fix for an aging and broken sewer system at Building 606. As part of that discussion, the city was trying to figure out if it could dig in the soil around Building 606. According to an email thread between SFDPH and Navy officials that we obtained, the Navy gave the go-ahead for city workers to dig a pit for a sewer vault. The Navy said that no radiological safety precautions were needed to handle the soil, and SFDPH environmental engineer Amy Brownell agreed. She relied on three 2013 letters from state regulators that gave unrestricted radiological release for three soil sites overlapping with Building 606 (the sites of buildings 503, 507, and 508). At the same time, the Navy was reviewing Tetra Tech's data from that part of the shipyard for any problems. The Navy later found there was "evidence of potential data manipulation or falsification" across more than 60 percent of Parcel E, including 503 and 507. **Given that the Navy was reviewing Tetra Tech's data at the time, why didn't SFDPH question whether the radiological releases might not be valid, and that digging near Building 606 might be a concern? Why didn't SFDPH recommend waiting until the Navy's review of the data was completed?**
- Bert Bowers, a former rad tech at the shipyard, who later became a whistleblower, reviewed the email thread for The Chronicle and said that SFDPH should have assumed the worst about the soil at Building 606 until they could have proved otherwise. He said the department should have tried to verify Tetra Tech's soil data in the area before allowing any digging given the questions about Tetra Tech's data that had been raised at that point. **What is SFDPH's response to that? Why wasn't more done to verify the radiological releases of the soil sites at Building 606 given the questions that had been raised about Tetra Tech's work?**

In sum, the police and documents speak to a rush to lease Building 606 to the city without proper reviews and without providing full information to the city — and to the police officers who worked at the building — about the possible dangers at the site and surrounding land. The police have said that the recent questions about Tetra Tech's integrity, and the criminal convictions of two of its former supervisors, suggest that the Navy and regulators may have lost control of the cleanup, even as the cops were repeatedly told that it was safe to work in the shipyard. Some of the police who worked at Building 606, as well as some of the dogs on the K-9 unit, have gotten

cancer and other ailments. They wonder if they and their families might have been exposed to cancer-causing toxins from Building 606 and if they may get sick in the future. **What is SFDPH's response to these allegations and concerns? Could police who worked at Building 606, or their families, have been exposed to possibly harmful levels of radiation or other toxins? What about the police and other city employees who work there now? As asked above, does SFDPH believe it's safe for people to continue working at Building 606? If so, how do you know that?**

Thank you for your time and consideration of this. If you have any questions, Jason Fagone can be reached at (415) 777-6018 and Cynthia Dizikes can be reached at (415) 777-7923.

Thank you again,

Jason Fagone and Cynthia Dizikes